



## DUST MITE PROTOCOL

August 20, 1998  
(major messages in bold)

### Visit One

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#### Supplies

- ☐ Give allergy control covers and help client place mattress and pillow allergy control covers on bed

### Visit Two: What are mites and how they affect asthma

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#### Assessment

- ☐ Review need for second set of sheets for child's bed and note size of sheets needed.
- ☐ Check to see if allergy control covers are in use and if there are any problems with them. Indicate in tracking system if covers are not being used (a63).

#### Supplies

- ☐ Give allergy control covers at visit one and help client place mattress and pillow allergy control covers on bed

#### Education

- ☐ **Dust mites are the most important indoor cause of allergies which cause asthma and trigger asthma attacks.**
- ☐ Dust mites are tiny creatures related to spiders and ticks.
- ☐ **They occur mainly in dust found in bedding materials (mattresses, blankets, sheets, pillows, bed covers), carpets, drapes, soft toys and upholstered furniture.** The highest levels of mites are found in the mattress and bedding material.
- ☐ They are found in every home in Seattle, no matter how clean.
- ☐ Their source of food is human skin scales and animal dander.
- ☐ **Mites get their water from the moisture in the air so they grow best in moist, humid places.**
- ☐ Getting rid of dust mites can be a big help in controlling asthma and allergies. In some cases, getting rid of mites can eliminate all asthma symptoms.
- ☐ **The most important method for controlling mites is to use allergy covers on mattresses and pillows.**



### Supplies

- ☐ Help client place mattress and pillow allergy control covers on bed

### Referrals

- ☐ None

## Visit Three: How to Control Mites

### Assessment

- ☐ Check to see if allergy control covers are in use and if there are any problems with them. Indicate in tracking system if covers are not being used (a63).
- ☐ Check the home problem list to see if there are any mite-related issues and address them during this visit.
- ☐ Check the temperature of the hot washing machine water to see if it is at least 130 degrees (if the house has a washing machine) and record temperature in tracking system. Indicate in tracking system if water is not at least 130 degrees (a62).

### Education

#### *Higher priority*

- ☐ **The most important method for controlling mites is to use allergy covers on mattresses and pillows.**
- ☐ **The allergy covers should be wiped off with a damp cloth once a month.** They don't need to go in the wash.
- ☐ **Wash bedding materials (sheets, pillowcases, blankets) weekly.** Ideally, use water with a temperature of at least 130 degrees. Many homes will not have water this hot. In this case, options include (1) washing bedding at a laundromat which does have hot water, (2) presoaking the bedding for 30-60 minutes in warm water to which eucalyptus oil has been added (see protocol) or (3) using the hottest water available in the home.

#### **Eucalyptus Oil Presoak Instructions**

1. Fill the washing machine with warm water.
2. Add 4 oz. (1/2 cup) of eucalyptus oil/detergent mixture and stir briefly.
3. Soak the bedding for 30-60 minutes.
4. Add regular laundry detergent and wash as usual.

To make the eucalyptus oil/detergent mixture, add 1 part liquid detergent to 4 parts eucalyptus oil and shake well. For example, mix 4 oz. detergent with 16 oz. oil to make a to make 20 oz. of mixture, enough for five wash loads.

- ☐ Dry bedding materials using the HOT cycle.
- ☐ Use fleece or other easily washable blankets to replace blankets/quilts/duvets that trap dust and are hard to wash.
- ☐ **Keep stuffed animals out of the child's bed and sleeping area and wash them in the same manner as bedding each week. Even better, try to avoid stuffed toys altogether.**
- ☐ **Vacuum carpeted floor or damp mop hard floor, dust and clean child's sleeping area twice a week.**
- ☐ Vacuum other floors in the house weekly.
- ☐ **Remove upholstered furniture from the child's bedroom. Replace with wood, vinyl or leather furniture. If can't, then vacuum weekly.**
- ☐ Avoid sleeping or lying on upholstered furniture or carpets.

#### *Lower priority*

- ☐ Remove cloth drapes, curtains and other window treatments from the child's sleeping area and use plastic or vinyl blinds instead. If can't remove drapes, vacuum weekly.
- ☐ Remove carpets from the child's sleeping area. Before taking up the carpet, check the condition of the underlying floor by lifting up a corner of the carpet. If the client is a tenant, ask the client to check with the landlord/manager first before doing so. Be sure the client thinks it's reasonable to approach the landlord manager on this issue before proceeding.
- ☐ Remove carpets from other rooms, especially those that lie on concrete. Before taking up the carpet, check the condition of the underlying floor by lifting up a corner of the carpet. If the client is a tenant, ask the client to check with the landlord/manager first before doing so. Be sure the client thinks it's reasonable to approach the landlord manager on this issue before proceeding.
- ☐ Store cleaned sheets in plastic bags.
- ☐ Keep the moisture level in the house low (below 50% relative humidity). This will be discussed more in the session on moisture control.

#### **Supplies**

- ☐ Second set of sheets (if needed)
- ☐ Eucalyptus oil (if requested)

#### **Referrals**

- ☐ None

## Visit Four: Mite Follow-Up

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### Assessment

- ☐ Check to see if allergy control covers are in use and if there are any problems with them. Indicate in tracking system if covers are not being used (a63).
- ☐ Check to see if sheets are being washed weekly in hot water. Indicate in tracking system if sheets are not being washed weekly (a65).

## Visit Six: Mite Follow-Up

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### Assessment

- ☐ Check to see if allergy control covers are in use and if there are any problems with them. Indicate in tracking system if covers are not being used (a63).
- ☐ Check to see if sheets are being washed weekly in hot water. Indicate in tracking system if sheets are not being washed weekly (a65).

## Visit Eight: Mite Follow-Up

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### Assessment

- ☐ Check to see if allergy control covers are in use and if there are any problems with them. Indicate in tracking system if covers are not being used (a63).
- ☐ Check to see if sheets are being washed weekly in hot water. Indicate in tracking system if sheets are not being washed weekly (a65).